

# FRUSTRATED ATTEMPTS TO JAM FERRYBOATS IN THE RUSH TO ESCAPE PERIL

## TNT BLASTS CAUSE A DAY OF TERROR

Continued from First Page.

In no immediate danger and probably would not be exploded.

Late last night an army officer reported that the danger of another explosion was remote, provided the wind did not change. At that time the wind was blowing from the west, and the underground magazines, where many tons of TNT are stored.

Major Gen. C. C. Williams, Chief of Ordnance, U. S. A.; Capt. Wilson, also of the ordnance division, and Lieut. Nuffield arrived in Perth Amboy from Washington last night and consulted with the city's fire department. All declined to talk at the end of their conference.

### Fire Chief Severely Hurt.

Among the injured at the Lakewood Hospital are Chief Hayes and Capt. Almsworth of the guards who protected the Gillespie plant, and Chief Donahue of the Perth Amboy Fire Department. All were hurt while working at the scene of the explosion. Chief Donahue's wounds are serious.

After several hours of comparative silence another explosion shook New Jersey at 10 o'clock last night. A series of three more were felt, beginning at 10:45 P. M.

The property damage will probably run up to almost \$300,000. The plant, owned by the Government, cost \$12,000,000. The explosives stored for manufacture were worth \$8,000,000.

The village of Morgan, near the plant on Raritan Bay, was the worst off. The town of South Amboy, where most of the 2,500 Gillespie employees lived, looks today like the pictures of French villages after long bombardment by both sides.

In Perth Amboy, a city of 60,000 persons five miles from the scene of the explosion, there are windowless houses and streets filled with broken trees. On all the area of land within fifteen miles of Morgan the hand of destruction was laid. In Newark, Elizabeth, New Brunswick, across Raritan Bay on Staten Island, up the Jersey shore, and even in downtown Manhattan, real estate suffered more or less.

### Exodus of Families.

All this apart from the terror of the munition workers and other families of South Amboy driven from their homes, streaming through a night illuminated by monstrous orange colored torches that cleft the sky above.

Morgan, tugging at their tables and chateaus, beaten to earth by new and greater explosions as they toiled along, stumbling across the long bridge that spans the Raritan between South Amboy and Perth Amboy, finding shelter where the Red Cross and a hundred other agencies of relief and the people of Perth Amboy could supply it, or sleeping huddled in shawls in the public park.

Observers who have been in France said the scenes were comparable to an exodus of refugees from the war zone and the likeness was probably exact. Just as in France, the refugees and the people of Perth Amboy could supply it, or sleeping huddled in shawls in the public park.

"And it would have done your heart good," an army man said, "to see the number of these poor devils from the T N T plant who said they would go back to work to work the moment the new plant was built."

### Inquiries for Relatives.

Women with children who had been homeless in South Amboy all day received the new warning of danger in the afternoon hysterically, but were relieved when told that the danger could be ascertained the danger was passed. In the meantime those who had not been driven from home by fear of the explosions or marching soldiers, but by military forces who took possession of the district were running about inquiring for word as to their relatives, who were reported to have been missing.

Army officers said they thought the dead numbered about a hundred. Workers from the plant said this was a very low estimate, but could not give figures to support their own belief. The Gillespie company employed about 2,500 men and women. They worked in three shifts.

The shift on duty at 7:45 on Friday evening when the great blowup started was smaller than usual. No more than 400 men were in the building where the first explosion occurred.

### Fourteen Bodies Recovered.

Fourteen bodies are known to have been taken from the plant, thus far. Major Smith, in command of the Eleventh Battalion of the United States Coast Guard, was reported last night as having not been seen by his men since 9 A. M. yesterday, but was not definitely reported missing.

The Department of Justice took charge of the investigation of the cause of the catastrophe. Its agents swarmed around the wire fence that surrounds the Gillespie enclosure. So far as known they have not yet reached anything like a conclusion. Nor has Mr. Gillespie or his partners.

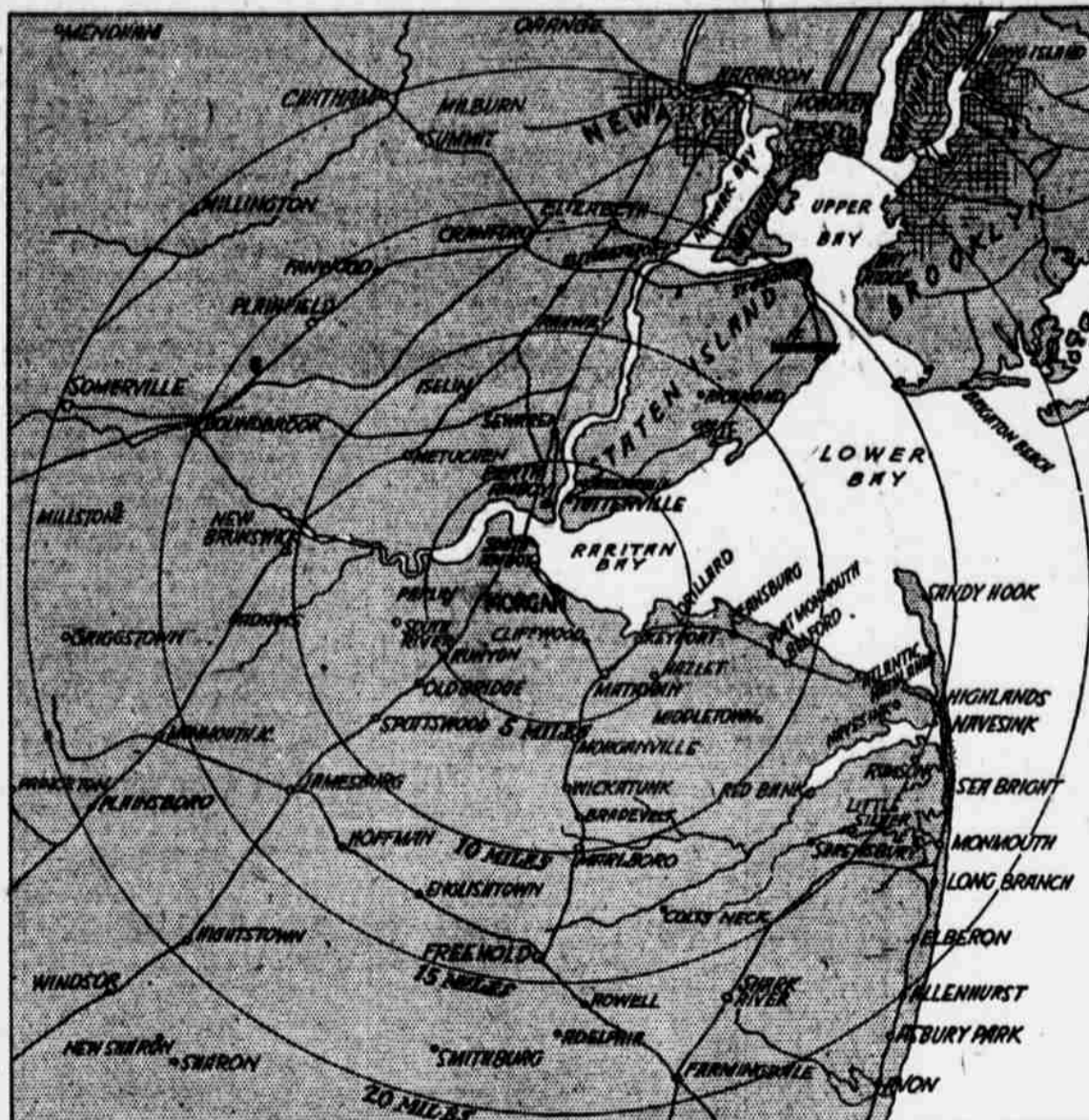
A workman who says he was in one of the buildings asserts that a kettle of chemical mixture which should be heated only to 90 degrees, was raised to 105 degrees, that the mixture exploded and set fire to the interior of the building and that the flames from this ignited another building and that the first of the tremendous blasts followed.

### Lull in the Explosions.

In the following three hours the bombardment from the TNT plant was regular and terrific. At about 10 o'clock Friday night there came a lull and everybody hoped that the worst was over. But at 10 o'clock in the morning came a shock that was felt as far away as Islip, fifty miles down Long Island. A bigger one was felt at 4 A. M. in the morning, another about 10 A. M. and the heaviest of all a few minutes after noon.

Not only was TNT exploding in mass, but loaded shells were being fired by the heat and driving helterskelter through the New Jersey shore, adding to powder, which blossomed into beautiful, terrifying, sunbursts at the top, gave

## Cities and Towns Within Twenty Mile Radius of Disaster



all the light that any one could ask for.

Col. Douglas L. McKay, ex-Police Commissioner of New York, arrived yesterday from Washington to investigate for the Ordnance Department. He was one of those who talked with Major Armstrong and Capt. Watson after their airplane observation trip. He would make no statement, but from others it was learned that the TNT laden barges were about a mile from the nearest flames and seemingly were in no danger of going up.

The early explosions devastated the village of Morgan and the later ones a mess of South Amboy. Miles away at Lakewood, the Rev. Dr. J. J. McKeown, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, swayed under an atmospheric blow administered at 12:06 o'clock in the afternoon and bricks showered to the street. The last major explosion came at about 4 P. M.

It was said last night that three large magazines containing unexploded TNT were located at Lakewood. They are underground and under concrete roofs.

Lieut. Sayre of Company B, Fifteenth Battalion of the United States Guard, with a railroad employee who knew only enough about a locomotive to start it, ran twelve freight cars filled with TNT out of the yards of the munition plant yesterday.

Sergeant William C. Schilling of Lieut. Sayre's company went back to bed Friday night after the explosions had stopped and he thought that there was no more danger. He said the big explosion that began about midnight lifted him out of bed. He dropped to the floor thoroughly awake.

Schilling was ordered to leave the patients in the camp hospital. He got automobiles and took some of the patients to Keyport, where he commanded a hospital. The other patients were taken to the Government hospital at Lakewood. During the journey to Keyport the glass in all of the automobiles shattered.

Miss Hazel Yeager of 489 Ninth avenue, a nurse who responded early yesterday to the call for relief workers, was working at a temporary hospital in South Amboy. She said the whole building broke up and glass sprinkled the patients.

In the camp hospital there were three men held as prisoners. When the other patients were taken out these men remained. An officer ordered them released. They quickly made a getaway.

The chief electrician of Unit 6-11, where the first explosion occurred, was blinded. He said that 200 men were working in the plant at the time. The number of dead exceeds present estimates.

The Rev. Father Quinn of Perth Amboy went to the plant, arriving there at midnight Friday. He accompanied Chief of Police Burke of Perth Amboy, Father Quinn went into the burning buildings of the munitions plant and administered the last sacrament to men dying of burns. When the peril became too great Chief Burke forced him into his automobile. Father Quinn jumped from the moving car and ran back toward the plant. Chief Burke caught him and again forced him back into the automobile.

It was said by Government officials yesterday that the Morgan plant had been particularly careful in weeding out enemy agents from among applicants for work. The plant was a military installation with the strictest security measures.

The Central Railroad of New Jersey discontinued its regular schedule, refusing to take passengers further than Newark, eight miles from Morgan station. The nearest to Morgan that news-papers could get was Perth Amboy, five miles away. While a SUN reporter was telephoning from Perth Amboy the old Packard house lost a door.

There were eight bodies in the undertaking rooms of Coroner E. L. Mason at Perth Amboy last night, and it was said there were fifteen bodies at the morgue in South Amboy. The only body definitely identified to that time was that of John Miller of Newark, an inspector at the Gillespie plant.

Mr. Gillespie said he believed the company's payroll was saved and that by checking up names to-day he probably could tell definitely who among his employees were lost. Three hundred soldiers of the Regular Army went to the outskirts of the plant last night to relieve Coast Guard men and militia who were working twenty-four hours.

Chief Bravens Peril to Help.

A girl, Mignon Brickman, living near the Gillespie enclosure, stayed up all Friday night making hot coffee for the guards and refugees and kept fire until the guards compelled her to leave.

In Perth Amboy they were also telling of the bravery of George Francisco and Richard Lamb, mechanical engineers on duty at the plant, who after the first explosion crawled through the darkness and shut off the live steam supply of the entire plant so that it

might not overheat and explode TNT buildings whence the workers had fled.

An elderly man, the last of the refugees, limped into Perth Amboy last night. He said that South Amboy is in darkness except for the glare from the burning munitions plant. Few persons are there except soldiers, sailors and a few officers of the company.

Lack of sleep and shock made the old man slow in answering inquiries. He was oppressed by the fear that other and worse explosions were inevitable. He said unexploded shells littered the road over which he had come.

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## LITTLE INSURANCE TO COVER EXPLOSION

### Only Special Policy Gives Reimbursement for Damage at Morgan Plant.

Comparatively few properties were covered by insurance from the damage done yesterday by the explosions in South Amboy. Insurance officials say that in general the ordinary fire insurance policy does not cover damage from explosions. A special policy is issued for explosions, which in turn does not cover damage from fire.

A great many people in New York have taken out the special bombardment policy, but this does not cover the damage from the South Amboy disaster.

To be properly covered, according to insurance officials, persons living near the munition plant should take out both fire and explosion policies. For policies covering against explosions occurring on or off the premises the special class rates range from 25 cents a \$100 to \$1.50 a \$100, dependent upon the character of the explosive and the character of the premises.

Fire insurance rates range from 10 to 16 cents a \$100.

In the case of explosion insurance 50 per cent. of the value of the property must be insured. If 100 per cent. property value is insured the rate is reduced a third. Explosion insurance also does not cover bombardment, enemy attack, strikes, etc. A special risk policy, however, covers all these things at rates according to zones. A man living at an exposed ocean point would have to pay \$1 a hundred over and above the ordinary rate owing to the danger from sea attack.

The four classes of insurance created as a result of war conditions, the acts of spies or other enemy agents and other dangers, were defined by the insurance companies, follow:

A. Explosion—A policy assuming all direct loss or damage caused by explosion from any cause, including aerial craft, machine or fly wheel explosions originating within said apparatus, which explosions are caused only by causes of a mechanical nature.

B. Bombardment—A policy as above, including in addition damage caused by bombardment, naval and/or military, including aerial, machine or fly wheel explosions originating within said apparatus, which explosions are caused only by causes of a mechanical nature.

C. War risk—A policy as above, including in addition damage caused by war risk, including strike, (7) military or naval power, (8) bombardment, whether aerial, machine or fly wheel explosions originating within said apparatus, which explosions are caused only by causes of a mechanical nature.

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## SKYSCRAPERS ROCK UNDER NEW BLASTS

Some Windows Are Shattered, but Staten Island Hills Protect Manhattan.

### BROOKLYN IS HARD HIT

Broken Panes Litter Streets—City Hall Trembles and Doors Burst Open.

Staten Island's generous sized hills undoubtedly saved New York city from worse property damage than that which was inflicted upon buildings of all kinds in Manhattan, Brooklyn and on the island itself. Unprotected by that natural barrier, Jersey City, Hoboken and the other towns along the west bank of the Hudson were hit hard, and streets covered with glass, screens, shutters and other appurtenances askew on buildings in those places marked the path of the recurrent shocks.

Geologists were almost a unit in asserting that the Staten Island hills served as an effective buffer in throwing off the force of the explosions as they sped on their way toward the skyscrapers of lower Manhattan and the exposed residential sections of Brooklyn. Nevertheless, one of the blasts blew about fifty panes out of windows in the Produce Exchange Building, and a few moments later a mild panic was shaken in the City Hall when one of the shocks caused that structure to tremble.

Big Double Doors Burst Open.

Mayor Hylan was in his office at the time and a group of callers were waiting in the corridor outside his rooms, when five sets of double doors serving as an entrance to the front of the building burst open with a crash. Lieut. William Kennel, the hall's official bodyguard, took charge of the situation and quickly quelled the few excited callers who were in the building. A survey of the structure showed it was undamaged.

Apparently the greatest damage within the city was inflicted on buildings in lower Manhattan and in Brooklyn, especially in Flatbush, Bay Ridge, Coney Island, Fort Hamilton, Bensonhurst and Bath Beach, all of which sections were shattered. Most of these heavy plate glass affairs and the losses of the insurance companies will be heavy. So widespread was the damage, however, that there will be no way of estimating the extent until tomorrow, when the explosion drifted across the open expanse of the harbor.

While The Bronx and Queens appeared to have escaped damage almost entirely, the business district in Brooklyn suffered heavily, and along Fulton and other shopping streets in that borough hundreds of window panes were shattered. Most of these heavy plate glass affairs and the losses of the insurance companies will be heavy. So widespread was the damage, however, that there will be no way of estimating the extent until tomorrow, when the explosion drifted across the open expanse of the harbor.

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## HYLAN IS NERVOUS AND STOPS TRAFFIC

Continued from First Page.

Whitney, "that the order to shut off service through the tunnels was given out in the middle of a Saturday afternoon, which is one of the quietest times of the week. From our reports the congestion was not apparent much before 5 o'clock."

The police under the direction of Chief Inspector John Daly did excellent work. They covered the bridges and subway and railroad stations quickly and so well that what might have developed into serious jams, and possible panics, did not result in any serious accidents. But the police had the greatest difficulty in making many of the homegoing Brooklynites understand that it might be a long time before they could get home.

They insisted upon crowding into the cars and trains standing in the terminals and it was a wonder that some of those ancient vehicles withstood the strain.

Thousands took the advice to use the ferries. Most of them had forgot that such institutions existed and had to be directed by the police. Within half an hour these terminals were jammed with people and automobiles that extended in some cases for blocks. The police, however, were not to be deterred by human freight such as they had seldom before known.

It was the same story everywhere. The ferries running to Hamilton avenue and Atlantic avenue, Brooklyn, the Roosevelt street ferry from Manhattan to Broadway, Brooklyn, and the ferry running from Twenty-third street and from Thirty-fourth street, Manhattan, to Williamsburg were crowded to capacity. It was impossible to put on extra boats for most of the companies did not have any "extras."

It was surprising what great anxiety so many people showed to get to Brooklyn and get there right away. Many of those who finally reached the desired shore after a long period of struggle found that they could have got home quicker by waiting for the resumption of the regular service.

Struggle in Brooklyn.

The struggle to get out of Brooklyn was even keener. Thousands of persons on their way to their Manhattan and Bronx homes from Brooklyn factories, other thousands going on night shifts in the city, and